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BI-WEEKLY WARNING ISSUES
FOR THE DCI

18 May 1988

WARNING ISSUE

US/USSR: Successful Simulated Bomber Attack on Alaska

SPECIAL WARNING TOPIC

More Instability in Poland

Prepared by NIO/Warning and Staff

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WARNING ISSUE

US/USSR: Successful Simulated Bomber Attack on Alaska

Two Soviet TU-95/BEAR bombers recently conducted a successful low altitude simulated strike against Alaska. They penetrated US radar at low altitude by using successive flights of intruding aircraft.

The simulated strike on 13 April was part of a spring exercise in which about 30 Soviet BEAR bombers launched on tactical warning and engaged in simulated nuclear strikes against areas in the Soviet Union. Another six bombers, however, staged from a forward airfield and performed a strike profile against the North Slope of Alaska.

Initially, US intelligence identified only four bombers heading for Alaska. They flew in pairs, at an hour interval, towards the North Slope.

US aircraft were launched in reaction to the initial US intelligence tip-off and included two F-15 interceptors, a tanker for refueling support, and an Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft for vectoring the interceptors to the two Soviet bombers. The AWACS detected the first two bombers heading towards Alaska at 23,000 feet; the US fighters responded and escorted

the Soviet BEARS for about 22 minutes.

As the first pair of bombers left, the AWACS detected a second pair heading towards the North Slope at an altitude of 3000 feet in an obvious attempt to penetrate below ground-based radar coverage. Once again with AWACS support, the F-15's successfully intercepted the bombers.

A third pair of Soviet bombers subsequently showed on the AWACS radar. These bombers had deployed to the forward airfield and taken off undetected. As with the second pair of bombers, they also headed towards Alaska at low altitude. US fighters, low on fuel, had to return to base. The Soviet bombers were able to **complete their simulated strike unhindered.**

The rate of Soviet BEAR bomber operations against Alaska during the past two years has been unprecedented, and there are indications the Soviets soon will begin strike training missions near Alaska with supersonic BLACKJACK bombers. **Our reaction time and ability to deal with varying Soviet tactics are certain to be tested further.**

SPECIAL WARNING TOPIC

More Instability in Poland

The following special topic is one of a series of analyses of the problems of Eastern Europe. In our last biweekly, we looked at the

region as a whole. In coming weeks, we will examine other troubled countries and the implications of those difficulties for the United States.

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More Instability in Poland

The recent strikes at Nowa Huta steelworks and the Lenin shipyard, including popular demands for political pluralism, were the most serious since the imposition of martial law in December 1981. The regime has restored "order," but at the cost of its economic strategy and its bid for national reconciliation. The country remains polarized, and popular grievances are unresolved as the economy continues to falter.

Poland is not on the verge of collapse, but these fundamental problems assure continuing instability. Cumulatively, they could lead to violence and, in an extreme case, bring the Soviets to the brink of intervention. We may have little warning of an upsurge in serious unrest; the opposition's tactics and objectives are evolving and the government could yet make a mistake that would galvanize the populace.

- o Solidarity retains a hard core of supporters who want union independence and democratization of the country.
- o There is widespread unhappiness with inflation, eroded savings, and lower levels of personal consumption.
- o Some young workers are more inclined toward radicalism than the earlier generation of Solidarity activists.

The Jaruzelski regime faces fundamental dilemmas in responding to these challenges. While it has become somewhat more astute in handling dissent and popular demands, its room for maneuver is limited:

- o It cannot continue to cave in to demands for large wage increases--over 40 percent already this year--to offset the big price hikes that were

designed to reduce consumption. The economy badly needs austerity to resolve its financial and structural troubles; however, the government's weak responses to demands for pay hikes simply encourage more. At some point the regime may have to say "no" and risk greater confrontations.

- o The regime will not permit another independent union to form or make concessions that would lead to a truly pluralistic society. Its room for discussion of political issues is circumscribed by its policies--and Moscow's. The linkage of economic grievances and demands for political reforms will be difficult for the regime to accommodate.
- o The government, having failed again in its bid for national reconciliation, remains viewed with suspicion by most people.
- o It cannot count on the Church as a regime partner, although it will be a moderating influence and Cardinal Glemp will seek to head off violence.

Collectively, these problems point to more, possibly major, instability. When the next eruption will occur, however, is unclear. Activists probably will pause to regroup and reflect after the recent strikes, but many Polish opposition figures as well as government officials predict another round of significant confrontations well within two years. The country is strewn with dry political kindling that could, with the right spark, turn into serious unrest fairly quickly. If the government gets through the summer, another test is likely to come with the onset of cold weather, when the impact of steep hikes in energy prices will be felt. The chances are good that a new round of disturbances will take

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different forms than in the Solidarity period and that opposition leaders will modify their tactics in response to government actions this spring.

- o The lack of clear opposition leadership and national coordination of protest activity could be overcome quickly. Workers throughout the country are in closer communication than they were eight years ago. Emigres also will play coordinating and financing roles from Western Europe.

- o Scattered reports suggest that small groups of anti-regime activists want the struggle to turn violent. A few deaths would harden positions on both sides.

- o The physical deprivations of austerity can galvanize latent unhappiness quickly, possibly leading to large demonstrations.

- o New leaders with new tactics will emerge in unpredictable ways as labor unrest spreads. Lech Walesa already has called for a younger generation of leaders to come forth.

Another increase in unrest would pose difficult policy decisions for the United States.

- o There undoubtedly would be conflicting pressures from, for example, dissidents wanting more freedoms and the government endeavoring to "calm" the situation. Any US policy would be certain to offend one or the other.

- o Washington almost certainly would

be faced with more reports of human rights violations and the intractable problem of dealing with accusations.

- o Dissident leaders would attempt to influence the large Polish-American community in the United States, thereby tending to make handling a crisis a domestic US political issue.

- o Washington would have to make decisions about how to use its modest economic leverage. The US continues to be a direct creditor of Poland via the Commodity Credit Corporation and has a major voice in Paris Club and IMF discussions on both government debt reschedulings and new credits. US banks also retain large holdings of Polish debt and play major roles in rescheduling negotiations.

- o NATO countries could well disagree with the US over how to deal with new problems in Poland; West Germany, in particular, may be willing to help the Jaruzelski regime reestablish tranquility in ways we oppose.

- o Even a low level of continuing instability in Poland would strengthen Soviet conservatives, challenging Gorbachev's reform program and possibly diverting his attention from issues like arms control that are important to the US.

- o More remotely, unrest in Poland could help trigger outbursts in other East European countries, complicating Moscow's response, increasing the likelihood of repression and, increasing US/Soviet tensions.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Unprecedented Cuban deployment in southern Angola forcing South Africa to move more troops to the front ... despite high financial costs and possibly significant South African casualties, President Botha almost certainly will challenge any Cuban move against the Calueque dam, a source of both electricity and water for Namibia.

Possibility of US-Soviet air incident remains high ... since West German Cessna landing in Moscow in May 1987, worldwide Soviet fighter reaction to US reconnaissance aircraft has increased and been more provocative ... over 60 Soviet fighters this year have flown to within 30 meters of US aircraft ... last year a Soviet Su-27/FLANKER collided with a Norwegian P-3 Orion reconnaissance aircraft.

North Korea is escalating threats against the Olympics ... broadcast on 1 May sharpened earlier warnings that those who attend may be at personal risk ... coincides with construction of at least two SA-5 sites in southern North Korea that will threaten US and South Korean military flights and commercial air traffic using Seoul's airport.

Iran increasing military activity in Persian Gulf ... two SILKWORM launch sites under construction will bring number near Strait of Hormuz to ten ... Air Force units near the Strait have been ordered to confront US aircraft violating Iranian airspace ... first deployment of a frigate since clash with US Navy last month and small boat activity may indicate renewed attempts to disrupt shipping.

Soviets continuing diplomatic offensive in Western Hemisphere ... Supreme Soviet delegation in April received by heads of state of Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago ... Gorbachev planning to visit South America later.

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